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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/721,141	11/25/2003	Thomas Edwin Long	B020680	6341

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EXAMINER
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ROBINSON, GRETA LEE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2168

DATE MAILED: 05/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/721,141

Applicant(s)

LONG, THOMAS EDWIN

Examiner

Greta L. Robinson

Art Unit

2168

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-43 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/14/05 &amp; 6/4/04</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. Claims 1-43 are pending in the present application.

#### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

2. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on June 4, 2004 and October 14, 2005 are in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statements have been considered by the examiner, note attached copies of form PTO 1449.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 1-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding independent claims 1, 18 and 32 the limitation "persisting" is vague and not clear [note: claim 1 line 5; claim 18 line 7; and claim 32 line 7]. The meaning of the term is not clear. Claims 2-17, 19-31 and 33-43 are rejected based on dependency.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-13, 15-29, 31-41 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Skufca et al. US Patent 6,922,695 B2 in view of Wheeler et al. US Patent 6,839,714 B2.

Regarding claim 1, **Skufca et al.** teaches a generic product finder system for managing and performing searches on configurable products in a J2EE application comprising [note: J2EE Web Application Server (810) Figure 8]:

a manager component for performing searches in response to a search query [note: Enterprise JAVA Bean (880); col. 6 lines 2-58; col. 10 lines 59-67];

a product component for persisting a plurality of product information and interacting with the manger component in conducting searches of the product information [note: Figure 8 (830); col. 11 lines 11-33];

a product metadata component that interacts with the manager component for defining a product specification [note: col. 12 lines

28-45; J2EE specification addresses rule-based authorization col. 13  
lines 28-45]; and

a search configuration component that interacts with the manager  
component for constructing a set of search rules in a product search  
configuration [note: col. 3 line 59 through col. 4 line 8; col. 12 lines 53-55].

Although Skufca et al. teaches the invention substantially as cited above, they do not explicitly depict a search configuration component. Wheeler et al. teaches a search configuration component [note: search component 415 Figure 4; col. 10 lines 31-45]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention to have combined Wheeler et al. with Skufca et al. because a search component would provide a means for implementing Skufca et al.'s search rules through the J2EE Web Application Server (810).

7. (Claim 2) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the manager component is a session bean object and a single point-of-entry to the product information [note Skufca et al.: Figure 8 EJB (880); also note Figure 7B].

8. Regarding claims 3 and 4:

(Claim 3) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the product specification is defined by metadata [note Skufca et al.: col. 14 lines 14-48 the application assembler to define role-based access].

(Claim 4) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 3 wherein the product specification metadata conform to an XML schema [note Skufca et al.: col. 12 lines 30-46; col. 12 line 66 through col. 13 line 6].

9. Regarding claims 5 and 6 note Skufca et al.:

(Claim 5) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the product information is persisted by the use of an entity bean [note: Fig. 4; Fig. 5 (520); Fig. 6 (620); and Fig. 8 (830)].

(Claim 6) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the product information is grouped into parameters and accessories [note: API interface may group selected elements col. 3 lines 27-47; col. 3 line 59 through col. 4 line 8].

10. Regarding claim 7:

(Claim 7) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the product parameters define a set of basic characteristics for a product [note Skufca et al.: col. 9 lines 45-55].

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12. The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1

11. Regarding claim 8:

(Claim 8) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the product accessories define a set of optional characteristics for a product [note Skufca et al.: col. 9 lines 45-55].

12. Regarding claims 9 and 10:

(Claim 9) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the product parameters are defined as XML elements having a plurality of attributes [Skufca et al. col. 9 lines 45-55].

(Claim 10) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the product accessories are defined as XML elements having a plurality of attributes [note: Skufca et al. col. 9 lines 45-55].

13. Regarding claims 11 and 12:

(Claim 11) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the search configuration component defines a search configuration for each type of product [note: Skufca et al. col. 2 lines 7-41].

(Claim 12) The generic product finder for managing and performing searches of

claim 1 wherein the search configurations are generated dynamically [note: Skufca et al. col. 2 lines 7-41].

14. Regarding claim 13:

(Claim 13) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 wherein the set of search rules define a set of product search behavior [note: Skufca et al. col. 14 lines 14-41].

15. Regarding claims 15-17:

(Claim 15) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 1 further comprising an interface for accessing the manager component to initiate a product search [note: col. 1 lines 1-20; Fig. 7A & 7B].

(Claim 16) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 15 wherein the interface is a Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) interface [note: resources may be accessed by different API's col. 5 line 59 through col. 6 line 36. Although Skufca et al. does not specifically teach SOAP interface it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention to have implemented such an interface since Skufca et al. teaches various other different interfaces may be integrated. A SOAP interface would allow the XML files taught in



Skufca et al. to be accessed efficiently].

(Claim 17) The generic product finder system for managing and performing searches of claim 15 wherein the interface is a remote interface integrated with the J2EE application [note: interface provides for remote access ability see Figure 7A, 8 and 10].

16. The limitations of claims 18-29, 31-41 and 43 parallel claim 1-17; therefore they are rejected under the same rationale.

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

17. Claims 14, 30 and 42 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

#### **Conclusion**

18. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Sharma et al. US Patent 6,912,569 B1

Sharma et al. US Patent 6,877,111 B2

Ripley US Patent 6,829,606 B2

Beall et al. US Patent 6,169,992 B1

Doshi US Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0010578 A1

Mamou et al. US Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0262191 A1

19. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Greta L. Robinson whose telephone number is (571)272-4118. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30AM-6:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim T. Vo can be reached on (571)272-3642. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



GRETAL ROBINSON  
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Greta Robinson  
Primary Examiner  
May 17, 2006